

# NORTH FORK LANDOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

PO Box 1603  
Columbia Falls, MT 59912

January 18, 2007

Hon. Chair Sinrud, Hon. Vice Chair Taylor and Members of the House Appropriations Committee:

The North Fork Landowners' Association ("NFLA") would like this letter to be placed on record in support of HB 189.

The NFLA was founded in 1947 as the North Fork Improvement Association. We are a 250-member community based group who owns land in the North Fork area of Flathead County in Montana. Landowners in the North Fork come from varied and diverse backgrounds that are reflected in our differing views on a great many issues.

The one issue that brings us together like no other is the threat of a mine in the Canadian Flathead. We share the North Fork river basin with our Canadian neighbors to the north. With this common watershed, upstream activities impact us regardless of the political boundary. The potential for environmental damage carries such adverse consequences, that proceeding with the mine carries unacceptable risks. Therefore the NFLA, as in the past, continues to strongly oppose extractive development of coal, coal bed methane and mineral deposits anywhere in the Flathead drainage. The Cline Mine is the latest proposal for these types of activities.

The Flathead Basin Commission has been instrumental in helping to protect the Flathead Basin. This Bill will help provide adequate funding for the Flathead Basin Commission to continue their activities in providing critical scientific data and, most importantly, will allow the Commission to stay engaged with the ongoing negotiations with Canada at this critical juncture.

It is imperative that we in Montana do all we can to deal with this threat that has the potential to jeopardize the environmental and economic health of the Flathead and all of Montana.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment in strong support of this Bill.

Sincerely,



Ed Heger, President  
North Fork Landowners' Association